

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing, re-examination and reconsideration of the subject matter identified in caption, as amended, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. §1.114, and in light of the remarks which follow, are respectfully requested.

Initially, Applicant wishes to acknowledge the interview held on August 30, 2006 between Examiner Sergent and Applicants' Representative. The Examiner's courtesy and helpful suggestions are acknowledged with appreciation.

By the present amendment, claims 24-26, 28, 29, and 53 have been amended in response to issues raised in the last Office Action. Claim 45 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 24-42, 44, 46 and 52-58 remain pending in this application.

Claims 24-42, 44-46 and 52-58 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for the reasons set forth on pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

In response to the position asserted in paragraph (1) of the Final Rejection, Applicants respectfully submit that the terminology "derived isocyanate function" in claims 26 and 28 is clearly defined in the specification (page 6, lines 20-26 and page 8, lines 3-6) such that those of ordinary skill in the art would readily comprehend the scope of the claims.

The Office Action further comments that "it is unclear if any of applicants' tricondensate polyfunctional isocyanate compositions are required to contain any isocyanate groups" (page 2, lines 9-11). Moreover, during the aforementioned interview, Examiner Sergent commented that the expression "polyfunctional isocyanate composition" in the preamble of the claims implied that the composition contained an active isocyanate group.

In response, Applicants respectfully submit that those of ordinary skill in this art would be aware that the expression "polyfunctional isocyanate" defines compositions obtained from isocyanate monomers, said compositions containing a variable proportion of free or blocked isocyanate groups and, optionally, one or more "derived" isocyanate groups (i.e., derived from isocyanate groups). The polyfunctional isocyanates are intended to react with labile hydrogen-containing compounds to yield polyurethanes. This conclusion is supported by the present specification which discloses polyfunctional isocyanate compositions containing free or blocked isocyanate groups (Example 2: the composition contains 17 wt.% NCO groups; Example 3: the composition contains 12.7 wt% NCO groups).

The Examiner has correctly examined the present application as though the claims require the presence of an active isocyanate group. The scope of claim 26, regarding the definition of the various groups, is to be read and understood in light of the description. The scope of this claim is understood by one skilled in the art as dealing with a tricondensate polyfunctional isocyanate having at least one free (or blocked) isocyanate function.

The claims have also been amended to define the polyfunctional tricondensate as a reaction product.

Claims 26 and 28 have also been amended to redefine the term "derived isocyanate function" in terms of a Markush group of disclosed functions. Support for the specific members are set forth on pages 6 and 8 of the specification.

With respect to the rejection of claim 45, Applicants disagree with the Examiner's position for reasons of record (see page 15 of the Amendment filed November 30, 2005). However, in an effort to reduce the number of issues and expedite prosecution, Applicants are canceling claim 45 without prejudice or disclaimer.

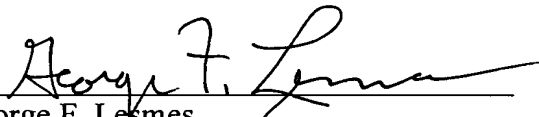
In view of the above, the §112, second paragraph rejection has been obviated and should be withdrawn.

From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order and such action is earnestly solicited. If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (703) 838-6683 at his earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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